



Date: October 20, 2006

In reply refer to: Advisory-1006

Subject: Sales and Fundraising

To: All OCFO Employees

As Federal employees, each of us must make every effort to know and understand the rules of ethical conduct. Understanding and observing these ethical rules are essential components to ensuring that we maintain high ethical standards and that we place loyalty to these standards above private gain.

The employees of the USDA Office of the Chief Financial Officer have been noted for their generosity, compassion, caring nature, and concern for needs of others. These are truly commendable qualities, and we recognize that there are many very worthy charitable organizations and causes devoted to providing service and assistance to those in need. As Federal employees, however, we must be mindful of the standards of ethical behavior and adhere to these guiding principles, including those that relate to sales and fundraising.

Traditionally, the start of each new school year is a time when schools, parent clubs, etc., initiate sales of various items and other benefit drives in support of their many fundraising initiatives.

As stated in paragraph (h) of USDA Personnel Bulletin: 735-1, USDA Employee Responsibilities, Subpart B – Conduct and Responsibilities of Employees, Section 735-201 Prohibited conduct – general, employees are prohibited from: canvassing for sales, or selling, any article (including but not limited to candy other items for schools or charities; kitchenware or other home furnishings, paper products; cosmetic products; or any other items whatsoever) in person or by distributing or posting literature, advertising matter, or any other graphic matter, in or on Government-owned or leased property, or property occupied by the Department.

By regulation, pursuant to Title 5 C.F.R § 950.102, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the only authorized solicitation of employees in the Federal workplace on behalf of charitable organizations. Regulations state, "...no other fund-raising drive may be conducted in the Federal workplace without the express written permission of OPM's Director." Upon written request, the Director of OPM may grant solicitations of Federal employees, outside CFC, in support of victims in cases of emergencies and disasters. Emergencies and disasters are defined as any hurricane, tornado storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, drought, fire explosion, or other catastrophe.

If you have questions or need advice regarding ethics related matters, please contact the Agency Ethics Office at 504-426-0370 or 504-426-0369.

WANDA C. MARTIN
Agency Ethics Advisor